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SPECTRE OF THE BROCKEN, IN THE HARTZ MOUNTAINS.

THIS is one of those curious and interesting atmospherical phenomena, or deceptions, which proceed from one common cause, an irregularity in the tenuity of the atmospheric fluid. This fluid is commonly of an homogeneous, or equable tenuity, and consequently suffers the rays of the sun to penetrate it without any obstruction or change; but is at times irregular, and composed of parts or bodies of a denser medium than its general texture and constitution. Under these circumstances, the fluent ray, if it do not enter the denser medium in a direct or perpendicular line, will be either reflected, or refracted, or both; and the object surveyed through it will assume a new, and, not unfrequently, a grotesque or highly magnified appearance.

The spectre of the Brocken is an aerial figure which is sometimes seen among the Hartz mountains in Hanover. This phenomenon has been witnessed by various travellers, and, among them, by M. Haue, from whose relation the following particulars are extracted:—"Having ascended the Brocken mountain for the thirtieth time, I was at length so fortunate as to have the pleasure of seeing this phenomenon. The sun rose about four o'clock, and the atmosphere being quite serene towards the east, its rays could pass without any obstruction over the Heinrichshöhe mountain. In the south-west, however, towards the mountain Achtermannshöhe, a brisk west wind carried before it thin transparent vapours. About a quarter past four I looked round, to see whether the atmosphere would permit me to have a free prospect to the south-west, when I observed, at a very great distance towards the Achtermannshöhe, a human figure of a monstrous size! A violent gust of wind having almost carried away my hat, I clapped my hand to it; and in moving my arm towards my head, the colossal figure did the same.

"The pleasure which I felt at this discovery can hardly be described; for I had already walked many a weary step in the hope of seeing this shadowy image, without being able to gratify my curiosity. I immediately made another movement, by bending my body, and the colossal figure before me repeated it. I was desirous of doing the same thing once more, but my colossus had vanished. I remained in the same position, waiting to see whether it would return: and in a few minutes it again made its appearance on the Achtermannshöhe. I then called the landlord of the neighbouring inn, and having both taken the position which I had taken alone, we looked towards the Achtermannshöhe, but did not perceive anything. We had not, however, stood long, when two such colossal figures were formed over the above eminence, which repeated their compliments by bending their bodies as we did, after which they vanished. We retained our position, kept our eyes fixed on the spot, and in a little time the two figures again stood before us, and were joined by a third" (that of a traveller who then came up and joined the party). "Every movement made by us these figures imitated; but with this difference, that the phenomenon was sometimes weak and faint, sometimes strong and well defined."

In Clarke's "Survey of the Lakes," a phenomenon similar to that of the spectre of the Brocken is recorded to have been observed in the years 1743 and 1744, on Souter-Fell, a mountain in Cumberland. It excited much conversation and alarm at the time, and exposed to great ridicule those who asserted they had witnessed it. The relation is as follows:—

Souter-Fell is a mountain about half a mile in height, inclosed on the north and west sides by precipitous rocks, but somewhat more open on the east, and easier of access. At Wilton Hall, within half a mile of this mountain, on a summer's evening, in the year 1743, a farmer and his servant, sitting at the door, saw the figure of a man with a dog, pursuing some horses along Souter-Fell side, a place so steep that a horse could scarcely travel on it. They appeared to run at an amazing pace, till they got out of sight at the lower end of the Fell. On the following morning the farmer and his servant ascended the steep side of the mountain, in full expectation

that they should find the man lying dead, being persuaded that the swiftness with which he ran must have killed him and imagined also that they should pick up some of the shoes which they thought the horses must have lost in galloping at so furious a rate. They were, however, disappointed, as not the least vestige of either man or horses appeared, not so much as the mark of a horse's hoof on the turf.

On the 23rd of June of the following year, 1744, about half-past seven in the evening, the same servant, then residing at Blakehills, at an equal distance from the mountain, being in a field in front of the farm-house, saw a troop of horsemen riding on Souter-Fell side, in pretty close ranks, and at a brisk pace. Having observed them for some time, he called out his young master, who, before the spot was pointed out to him, discovered the aerial troopers; and this phenomenon was shortly after witnessed by the whole of the family. The visionary horsemen appeared to come from the lowest part of Souter-Fell, and were visible at a place called Knott; they then moved in regular troops along the side of the Fell, till they came opposite to Blakehills, when they went over the mountain. They thus described a kind of curvilinear path, and their first, as well as their last appearance, was bounded by the foot of the mountain. Their pace was that of a regular swift walk; and they were seen for upwards of two hours, when darkness intervened. Several troops were seen in succession; and frequently the last, or last but one, in the troop would quit his position, gallop to the front, and then observe the same pace with the others. The same change was visible to all the spectators; and the sight of this phenomenon was not confined to Blakehills, but was witnessed by the inhabitants of the cottages within a mile. It was attested before a magistrate by the two above-cited individuals in the month of July, 1785. Twenty-six persons are said in the attestation to have witnessed the march of these aerial travellers.

It should be remarked that these appearances were observed on the eve of the rebellion, when troops of horsemen might be privately exercising; and as the imitative powers of the spectre of the Brocken demonstrate that the actions of human beings are sometimes pictured in the clouds, it seems highly probable, on a consideration of all the circumstances of this latter phenomenon on Souter-Fell, that certain thin vapours must have hovered round the summit of the mountain when the appearances were observed. It is also probable that these vapours may have been impressed with the shadowy forms which seemed to "imitate humanity," by a particular operation of the sun's rays, united with some singular, but unknown, refractive combinations then taking place in the atmosphere.

PUBLIC FOUNTAINS AT CAIRO.

IN Cairo there are no less than three hundred fountains fed by cisterns filled at the yearly inundation. When these reservoirs are exhausted, water is brought from the Nile on the backs of camels. The edifices which contain the fountains are nearly all built by charitable bequests; and very often on the floor above the pure and fresh water which refreshes the weary traveller, there is a school, in which gratuitous instruction is given to the children of the poor. The fountain *Seby-el-Bedawyeh*, represented in our engraving, is situated in the *Soug-el-Ezzy*, which leads by the *Soug-el-Salah* (the bazaar of arms) to the square of Roumelye, at the foot of the citadel. The inscription which it bears informs us that it was constructed by order of Sitti Bedawyeh, son of the emir Röchouan Bey, in the year of the Hegira 1173, and A.D. 1759. Sitti Bedawyeh left several inalienable legacies to provide fountains, to secure their maintenance, to pay a schoolmaster, and procure new suits of clothes at the Feast of Bayram for poor children who should come to learn to read the Word of God. The architecture of the edifice is remarkable for the richness and solidity which it displays, and which are seldom seen in buildings of ancient date. The columns are of marble, and the ornaments of the great arches which they sustain are painted and gilt. The gratings of the windows, supported by balustrades, are of